WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An applicator for applying a substance to nails comprising:

a rod having an end portion, including a housing defining an opening, said housing and said opening having an oblong cross-section with a long axis, said rod including a wall of varying thickness around said housing, said rod having a cross-section at said end portion having an outer contour which is not concave, except at the location of at least one groove extending along at least a portion of at least one side of said rod and being situated substantially mid-way along said long axis of said housing as seen in cross-section; and

bristles fixed in said housing and projecting therefrom.

2. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod includes a second groove on a second side of said rod, situated opposite said one groove and being situated substantially mid-way along said long axis of said housing as seen in cross-section.

3. An applicator according to claim 2, wherein said two grooves are symmetrical about a mid-plane parallel to said long axis.

4. An applicator according to claim 2, wherein said two grooves are of different shapes.

5. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said opening of the housing has a substantially rectangular cross-section.

6. An applicator according to claim 2, wherein, in cross-section, said end portion of said rod further comprises two opposite convex sides, each of said two opposite convex

sides connecting one of the sides including said at least one groove to the other of said two opposite sides.

7. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said housing includes an end wall distal from said end section, and said housing tapers progressively towards said end wall.

8. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said housing includes an end wall distal from said end portion including a recess in which said bristles are fixed, and wherein said housing further includes a housing portion which flares out from said end wall towards the opening of said housing.

9. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein the length of the portion of said bristles which project from said housing is between about 5 mm to 20 mm.

10. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein the free ends of said bristles substantially describe an arc of a circle having a radius of curvature lying between about 2 mm to 15 mm.

11. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein the free ends of said bristles substantially describe an arc of a circle having a radius of curvature between about 4 mm to 10 mm.

12. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein the width of said opening of said housing, measured perpendicularly to said long axis, is not greater than about 2 mm.

13. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod includes a portion intended to be immersed in a substance contained in a receptacle, said portion being a maximum width of not greater than 5 mm.

14. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod has first wall thickness around said housing at a longitudinal end of said housing and a second wall thickness measured mid-way along said housing said first wall thickness being smaller than said second wall thickness.

15. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod has a minimum wall thickness around said housing in the portions of said wall that are adjacent to the longitudinal ends of said long axis of said housing.

16. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod is adapted so as to be fixed to a closure cap of a receptacle.

17. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said rod comprises a single integral piece with a closure cap in a receptacle.

18. An applicator according to claim 17, wherein said rod and closure are cap comprised of molded plastic material.

19. An applicator according to claim 1, wherein said bristles extend outside the housing over a first width, measured parallel to said long axis, and said rod has a second width at said housing, said first width being greater than said second width.

20. A device for applying a substance to nails, said device comprising a receptacle containing the substance to be applied, and an applicator as defined in claim 1.